

SITUATION REPORT NO. 3
INCIDENT NO. 2006-020
DATE: July 19, 2006 Time 2:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck ND 58505

1. **NATURE OF DISASTER:** **Statewide Fires** – Fire conditions in areas of high fuel content have led to fires ignited by various sources including thunderstorms, agricultural operations and human error.

2. **DEATHS AND INJURIES:** The Sioux County Emergency Manager reported two firefighters battling a fire on July 18 were taken to the Indian Health Service (IHS) Hospital in Fort Yates where they were treated for heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

3. **DAMAGES:** Several blazes erupted across southern North Dakota on July 18, including the 12,000-acre Lund Fire in Sioux County that continues to burn this afternoon. At one point, the fire measured approximately four miles wide by 15 miles long. On July 18, the fire forced the evacuation of nine homes and approximately 400 head of livestock. Evacuated residents were sheltered by family and friends. The State Operations Center (SOC) received a report early July 19 that the multi-unit fire was reignited around 4:00 a.m. by a lightning strike and was burning out of control, heading east and south. A tenth residence was evacuated this morning as firefighters created fire breaks to battle flames that came within 750 feet of the home and 100 feet of a haystack. Firefighters have encircled the fire with a fire break measuring three dozer blade widths wide. Additionally, they conducted a burnout 66 feet from the dozer line. Hot spots of fire are still smoldering. Firefighters are patrolling to prevent the fire from jumping the line. Helicopter crews from the N.D. National Guard (NDNG) are dumping water in that vicinity. The Emergency Manager is monitoring a second farm for potential evacuation. Firefighters are currently conducting a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) assessment of the perimeter; winds are up to 20 miles per hour (mph) with gusts.

On July 19, the National Weather Service (NWS) issued a Fire Weather Watch for south central North Dakota, for gusty winds associated with a frontal passage and increased thunderstorm activity. The forecast for July 20 indicates an upper level

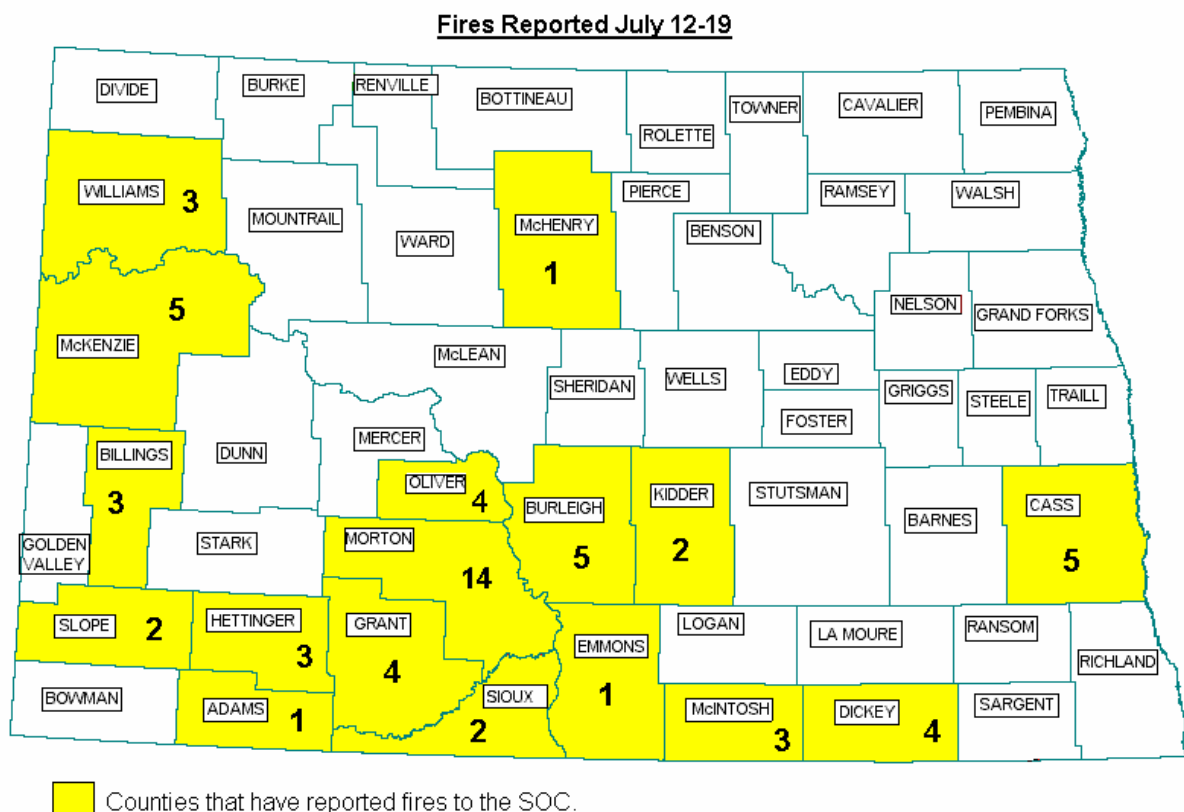
trough will move northwest to southeast across the area during the day. This will bring gusty southeast winds ahead of a front late Thursday morning, with winds shifting to the northwest and remaining gusty behind the front Thursday afternoon and evening. In addition to gusty winds the upper trough will bring increased thunderstorm activity from the north to south beginning early Thursday afternoon and continuing through Thursday evening.

While firefighters battled the Lund Fire, another fire erupted in Sioux County early July 19 near the Prairie Knights Casino and Lodge. Two units from the Flasher Fire Department and one from Mandan Rural Fire Department provided assistance.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) reported up to 200 acres of Little Missouri River Grassland burned near the Golden Valley County/Slope County line on July 18. A lightning strike caused the fire to flare up early July 19, but firefighters reported the fire is under control and mop-up operations are underway.

On July 18-19, in addition to the two Sioux County fires and the National Grassland fire, the SOC received reports of fires in the following areas: Wilton, Amidon, Medora, Hettinger, Mott, Carson, New Leipzig, Flasher, Lemmon, St. Anthony and Mandan.

In total, the SOC received 62 fire reports within the past week as illustrated in the state map below:



4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: Agencies monitoring fire conditions include county extension service officials, fire departments, dispatch centers, law enforcement, county and city public works crews, park boards and emergency management officials.

STATE: Agencies involved in monitoring fire reports include the Governor's Office, N.D. Department of Human Services, N.D. Fire Marshal's Office, N.D. Forest Service (NDFS), N.D. Game and Fish Department (NDGF), N.D. Parks and Recreation Department (NDPR), N.D. Department of Agriculture (NDDA), N.D. State Water Commission (NDSWC), and N.D. Department of Emergency Services (NDDDES) Divisions of Homeland Security and State Radio.

FEDERAL: Agencies providing periodic reports include the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National Weather Service (NWS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: The Burleigh-Morton Chapter of the American Red Cross responded to three prairie fires on July 18. Volunteers provided 75 sandwiches and five cases of water to 50 firefighters who responded to a Morton County grassland fire. A second team of volunteers was dispatched to the Baldwin area with 75 sandwiches and five cases of water for firefighters. Three volunteers, who were sent to the Fort Yates area around 7:30 p.m., provided 125 sandwiches and 20 cases of water. The volunteers returned 12:30 a.m. July 19.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: At Governor Hoeven's direction, the NDNG has been providing assistance to firefighters battling the Lund Fire. During the afternoon and evening of July 18, a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter and a UH1H Huey helicopter with water buckets provided water drops in critical areas. A Huey helicopter crew provided an aerial reconnaissance flight for the media, and an OH58 crew was dispatched to the Fort Yates area with helicopter parts. Early July 19, when the fire reignited, the NDNG dispatched one Huey crew, one Blackhawk crew and a fuel truck. Another Huey helicopter is on standby in Bismarck. Each UH1H has two pilots and one crew chief; and the Blackhawk has two pilots and two crew chiefs. One soldier is staffing the fuel tanker. Approximately 15 National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) certified and red-carded soldiers are on standby in Bismarck and will coordinate response through the N.D. Forest Service (NDFS).

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is serving as Incident Commander for the Lund Fire. Local responders include Solen, Selfridge, McIntosh and Fort Yates Rural Fire Departments; and the BIA Highway Department. The BIA has Type 6 engines, water tenders and blades on scene.

The BIA has requested a Type II Incident Management Team from Denver, CO, which is expected to arrive late this afternoon. The Fort Yates High School is serving as a staging area.

The NDFS has provided four Type 6 engines to the Lund Fire. Two engines were dispatched from Amidon, one from Bottineau and the fourth from Fort Lincoln. NDFS staff is on scene at the Lund Fire as well as the SOC.

N.D. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the N.D. Highway Patrol (NDHP) personnel are monitoring the Lund Fire and are ready to provide support, as needed. On July 18, the N.D. Highway Patrol temporarily closed U.S. Highway 83 at mile marker 106 and diverted traffic in the Baldwin area.

On July 19, State Water Commission (SWC) officials gave permission to take water out of the Missouri River based on a request from the Sioux County Emergency Manager for aerial suppression support in the form of helicopter water drops.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No additional assistance has been requested.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: In addition to mutual aid, the NDFS and NDNG, no outside help has been reported.
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The Rangeland Fire Index can be obtained on the internet at the N.D. Department of Emergency Services web site at www.nd.gov/des/info/firedanger.html or the NWS website www.crh.noaa.gov/bis/fire.php.

The N.D. Department of Emergency Services Situation Reports are posted on the Departments Internet home page. The address is <http://www.nd.gov/des>.

Greg Wilz, State Director